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Chairman: Mr. Mohamad ..... (Sudan)

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The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Agenda item 31: International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space (*continued*) (A/62/20)

1. **Ms. Chen** Peijie (China), commending the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) for its fruitful fiftieth session, welcomed its adoption of the set of conclusions of the Working Group on the Practice of States and International Organizations in Registering Space Objects, which would harmonize international practice and improve implementation of the Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space.

2. Over the past 50 years, more and more States had come to realize that outer space was not only important as a space for national strategy and security, a reservoir of resources for sustainable development and a focus for scientific and technological advances, but was also becoming a new growth sector in the world economy. The exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes should be one of the most important principles for all States to follow, and it was therefore urgent to negotiate an international legal instrument to prevent the weaponization of outer space or an arms race in space. At the 2007 meeting of the Conference on Disarmament, China and the Russian Federation had informally circulated a draft Treaty on the Prevention of the Deployment of Weapons in Outer Space and the Threat or Use of Force against Outer Space Objects, offering a vision of peace and rule of law that had been welcomed by a number of States.

3. To enhance the capacity of States to use outer space for peaceful purposes, it was essential to combine domestic innovation, aimed at national development in pursuit of a policy of independence, with international cooperation and exchanges, aimed at equality, mutual benefit and common development. A number of China's achievements in space exploration and satellite launching and its projects for cooperation with developing countries had yielded encouraging results.

4. Significant progress had also been made in regional space cooperation with the entry into force in 2006 of the Convention Establishing the Asia-Pacific Space Cooperation Organization (APSCO), which was headquartered in China and, once operational, should spur economic growth, social progress and higher living standards throughout the region. Also, her Government was actively preparing for the establishment of the Beijing office of the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (SPIDER). In a recent space-related court case, where two firms selling land on the Moon had been convicted of fraud, China had also had occasion to reaffirm the principle that, as the common heritage of mankind, the Moon was not subject to ownership claims.

5. **Ms. Altimova** (Kazahkstan), highlighting the importance of remote sensing, environmental monitoring, the use of nuclear-power sources in outer space and the maintenance of outer space for peaceful purposes, said that dynamic international cooperation over the past several decades in the application of space technologies had increasingly furthered the overall social and economic development of many Member States.

6. Kazahkstan was contributing to international space activities through its Baikonur launching pad, and was participating in various international projects, including some involving applications for environmental protection. Her Government's space programme included plans for producing national spacecraft up to the year 2020. In 2006, the country's first geostationary satellite, the KazSat, had been successfully put into orbit, with a second satellite to be launched in the near future. With that, Kazakhstan would join the group of 25 countries in the world that had two or more satellites in orbit. Its satellite system was supported by a ground-control complex consisting of monitoring and control centres and payload operations, soon to be expanded by facilities for training national cadres. With its partners in the region, it was working on another ambitious project to build the Baiterek rocket complex, and was considering developing a complex to launch smaller spacecraft for civilian applications. It had in addition signed an agreement with Russia, Belarus and Ukraine on outer-space cooperation, concerned mainly with joint use of the Baikonur launching pad for peaceful purposes.

7. There should be greater international cooperation to protect the environment, an area in which modern space science and technology had extensive applications. Many global problems stemmed from deterioration of the environment and from climate change — among them, water shortages, soil degradation and various natural and man-made disasters. In Kazakhstan, the issue was very real

because of the drying up of the Aral Sea, which could be monitored by space technology, or because of the former nuclear-testing ground in Semipalatinsk, whose impact on the population could be reduced only by multilateral cooperation.

8. Her Government had ratified the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, as well as a number of other instruments relating to outer space. COPUOS should be commended for its development of space law; and completion of the Plan of Action for the implementation of the recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III) would provide new impetus in that field.

9. **Ms. Joseph** (Saint Lucia) commended the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space for making the important linkages between space technology and development, spanning a range of subjects like search and rescue, early warning and remote sensing that were especially relevant to the sustainable development of small island developing States. Her Government was heartened by the consideration being given to establishing space-based services for use in disaster management and early-warning systems.

10. There was growing concern over the steady accumulation of space debris and the dangers it posed to functioning space systems. The development of the draft space-debris-mitigation guidelines by the Working Group on Space Debris was therefore to be applauded.

11. At the regional level, the Fifth Space Conference of the Americas, held in 2006, had addressed many issues of relevance to Latin America and the Caribbean, including international space law, the reduction and mitigation of natural disasters, environmental protection, tele-health, space education and access to technology. One of its major recommendations had been the establishment of national space bodies by the States of the region as a precursor to a regional body for space cooperation. Certainly, all efforts should be made to develop an internationally agreed regime for preventing the weaponization of space and preserving space as a peaceful realm.

12. **Mr. Oraon** (India) said that, during the past 50 years, the General Assembly and the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) had helped to strengthen international space cooperation and to maintain the peaceful character of outer space, thereby benefiting both space-faring and space-using countries.

13. Having participated actively in the work of COPUOS, his delegation welcomed that Committee's report and its endorsement of the space-debris-mitigation guidelines. The Legal Subcommittee of COPUOS had a leading role to play in developing and safeguarding the entire body of international space law.

14. His Government's space programme continued to prioritize the use of space technology for social and economic development. In January 2007, India had successfully launched two primary satellites, as well as two auxiliary satellites belonging to an international customer. Two Indian communication satellites (INSAT-4B and INSAT-4CR) had been launched in March and September 2007, respectively; and in April 2007, India's Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV-C8) had launched the Italian Space Agency's 350-kg AGILE satellite.

15. His Government used space applications to promote national development by providing better outreach to remote areas. Its Village Resource Centre (VRC) network was a single delivery mechanism for a variety of space-based products and services, including tele-education; telemedicine; information on natural resources; and interactive advisories on agriculture, fisheries and land, livestock and water-resources management.

16. At the international level, India cooperated with a number of space-related agencies through bilateral and multilateral agreements. In 2006, it had joined the United Nations and the United States in sponsoring a workshop on "Telemedicine in the Reconstruction of Afghanistan" and had hosted a workshop on basic space sciences in the context of the International Heliophysical Year 2007. The Indian Space Research Organisation also participated in the Sentinel-Asia project, conceived under the aegis of the Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum (APRSAF). In September 2007, India had hosted the fifty-eighth International Astronautical Congress, which had included special events celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the space age.

17. His Government shared its expertise and services in the application of space technology with developing countries, including through its United-Nations-affiliated Centre for Space Science and Technology Education in Asia and the Pacific (CSSTEAP). To date, the Centre had offered a number of postgraduate and short-term courses; over 700 scholars from 30 countries in the Asia-Pacific region and 26 scholars from 16 countries outside the region had benefited from its services.

18. The utilization of outer space for peaceful purposes served the interests of all nations. The long-standing international consensus on that issue could be undermined by the deployment of weapons in outer space or of weapons that targeted space assets. Space-faring nations had a particular responsibility to ensure that space remained the common heritage of mankind. His delegation was in favour of a multilateral effort to build consensus on international instruments banning the weaponization of outer space and on the development of confidence-building and transparency measures concerning outer-space activities.

19. Lastly, he noted that the risk of misuse of the high-resolution images of sensitive areas available on the Internet, including by terrorists, was a source of concern to many nations. Guidelines consistent with national policies should be developed in order to regulate public-domain access to such data.

20. **Mr. Lemos Godinho** (Portugal), speaking on behalf of the European Union; the candidate countries Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey; the stabilization and association process countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia; and, in addition, Armenia, Georgia, Iceland, Moldova, Norway and Ukraine, said that all States had the responsibility to ensure that space activities were conducted with a view to maintaining international peace and security, to prevent an arms race in outer space and to promote international cooperation in the free exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes.

21. The European Union strongly supported General Assembly resolution 61/111, establishing the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (SPIDER), and looked forward to full implementation of that initiative.

22. The issue of the commercialization and pollution of outer space should be dealt with within appropriate international and national legal frameworks; the European Union would welcome further work by the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs in those areas, which were of interest to both developing and developed countries. In particular, the risk posed by space debris was a source of concern to space-faring and non-space-faring nations. He welcomed the recent COPUOS endorsement of space-debris-mitigation guidelines and suggested that they might be complemented by the 2004 European Code of Conduct for Space Debris Mitigation.

23. In 2007, the European Union had adopted a European Space Policy aimed at increasing coordination with its member States and the European Space Agency. The strategic mission of that Policy was to promote the peaceful exploitation of outer space by all States and would focus on, inter alia, security and defence needs, the space industry, space-based science and space applications. Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES) was a European initiative aimed at harmonizing Earth-observation information; such programmes could help achieve the goals of the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development by improving peoples' lives, conserving national resources and reducing the effects of adverse weather conditions and climate change. With regard to the use of space technology for navigation, geopositioning and time synchronization, the European Union was developing a global satellite navigation system, Galileo, which could be used in such areas as transport, telecommunications, agriculture and fisheries.

24. The European Union States had voted unanimously in favour of General Assembly resolutions 61/75 (on transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities) and 61/58 (on prevention of an arms race in outer space), and had recently submitted concrete proposals pursuant to paragraph 1 of the former resolution. One such proposal concerned the development of a comprehensive code of conduct on space objects and space activities in order to strengthen existing agreements and codify new best practices. Key activities to be covered by such a code might include avoidance of collisions; development of safer traffic management practices; provision of assurances through improved information exchange, transparency and

notification measures; and adoption of more stringent space-debris-mitigation measures.

25. Complementarity between the work of the Conference on Disarmament and COPUOS and communication between those bodies would be essential in preventing duplication of effort and ensuring a coordinated approach to the issues of prevention of an arms race in outer space and preservation of the space environment.

26. **Ms. Bhanthumnavin** (Thailand), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), said that space technology and its benefits should be used only for peaceful purposes. The ASEAN States had noted with satisfaction the General Assembly's agreement to promote regional and interregional cooperation in the use of space science and technology and the progress made in establishing regional cooperation organizations in Africa, Latin America and the Asia-Pacific region during the past year; they looked forward to being active members of that global network, which would promote continued progress in many scientific fields. ASEAN was also pleased by the establishment of the SPIDER project and encouraged COPUOS to continue to develop a detailed work plan for the project.

27. Having suffered from the December 2004 tsunamis, the ASEAN States fully supported cooperation on disaster-management systems in their region, of which satellite technology was an essential component, including the Multi-donor Voluntary Trust Fund on Tsunami Early Warning Arrangements in the Indian Ocean and South-East Asia, the Sentinel-Asia project and the Asia-Pacific Space Cooperation Organization (APSCO). ASEAN wished to express its appreciation to the Governments of India, Japan and China, with which it had cooperated on many projects in the areas of disaster management and earth observation through the ASEAN Subcommittee on Space Technology and Applications (SCOSA), which used satellites to gather geo-informatics data and promoted space-science education in the region. Lastly, she noted that the ASEAN States were committed to the peaceful uses of space technology.

28. Speaking as the representative of Thailand, she said that her Government attached the utmost importance to using satellite communication to promote distance learning. The Klai Kangwon School, established in 1995, specialized in satellite transmission of lessons conducted by qualified teachers so that children in remote areas could receive the same education in science and the arts as those living in more privileged areas. That distance-learning network covered 3,000 schools in Thailand and was available worldwide to anyone with access to a computer.

29. Her Government pledged to cooperate with its neighbours in promoting space education and capacity-building. The Thailand Earth Observation System (THEOS), an observation satellite capable of exploring and monitoring natural resources, was scheduled to be launched by the end of 2007.

30. **Mr. Nanta Linggi** (Malaysia) said that it was a source of pride for Malaysia that it had recently sent one of its citizens into space to spend 8 days on the International Space Station, proving that the exploration of outer space was not limited to certain countries and that the developing countries could play a role in that endeavour. His Government would continue to strengthen its capability in space technology and collaborate with regional initiatives for space cooperation to promote sustainable development. It would share its expertise and cooperate with partners in such areas as space-related technology, scientific missions, education, training and industry.

31. The international community had a joint responsibility to use outer space as a focus for international cooperation to ensure the continued well-being of mankind. Space technology could benefit the developing countries in such areas as sustainable development, telecommunications, disaster management, natural-resources management and protection of the environment. In that context, his Government participated in such collaborative efforts as the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum (APRSAF), the ASEAN Subcommittee on Space Technology and Applications (SCOSA) and the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (SPIDER). He said that the United Nations should act as the focal point for the promotion of international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space.

32. The issue of space debris remained a source of concern. Countries involved in space activities should give serious attention to the problems that could be caused by collisions in space between satellites and

other launched space objects and debris. He noted that nuclear-powered space objects posed a particular threat if they re-entered the atmosphere following a collision and stressed that the introduction of weapons, particularly nuclear weapons, into space would seriously undermine international efforts to ensure the peaceful use of outer space. An international legal instrument should therefore be drawn up to prohibit the deployment of weapons in outer space.

33. He reiterated the need for international cooperation to strengthen efforts to use space technology to predict, monitor and mitigate natural disasters with a view to issuing early warning of natural disasters. Accordingly, his Government looked forward to the launch in the near future of its second Earth observation satellite, RazakSAT, which would be useful for monitoring environmental conditions, including forest fires, haze and natural disasters, particularly in the equatorial region.

34. His delegation would continue to cooperate with COPUOS and looked forward to chairing the forty-fourth session of its Scientific and Technical Subcommittee. It would likewise continue to work for the implementation of the outcomes of UNISPACE III and seek new ways of using space technology for the well-being of the peoples of the Earth.

35. **Ms. Ljubalina** (Russian Federation) said that her country favoured the expansion of international cooperation in the exploration of outer space, which should be conducted exclusively for peaceful purposes. Such activities should be subject to multilateral regulation by the United Nations, and specifically the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. Her delegation supported enhancement of the capabilities of the Committee as the world body primarily responsible for elaboration of the political and legal foundations for space activities. To that end, the Committee and its two subcommittees should be made more effective.

36. The Russian Federation favoured international cooperation with a view to launching the SPIDER programme, and supported the space-debris-mitigation guidelines. It considered that the deployment of weapons in outer space could jeopardize the whole system of international security. Consequently, it was high time to proceed with the drafting of a treaty to prohibit such activities, in the interests of preserving outer space for peaceful purposes.

37. Her delegation believed that space law should be developed in a dynamic fashion to respond to the contemporary level of cooperation in outer space. It was important to continue the progressive development of space law, including the elaboration of an international space-law convention covering all aspects of human activity in space.

38. **Mr. Nakano** (Japan) said that Japan was actively involved in space-related activities. It had successfully launched eight H-IIA and M-V rockets and would continue to improve its launch vehicle. The X-ray astronomy satellite Suzaku and the infrared astronomy and solar observation satellites Akari and Hinode continued to make a significant contribution to astronomy. The antennae of Engineering Test Satellite (ETS) VIII, also known as Kiku-8, had been extended, making it possible to engage in mobile communication using hand-held terminals and potentially providing a high data-rate communication service for disaster situations and isolated mountain and ocean regions. The orbiting satellite Kaguya was one of the largest Moon-exploration missions since the Apollo programme and the Wideband Internetworking Engineering Test and Demonstration Satellite (WINDS), to be launched in early 2008, would provide high-speed communications and Internet access.

39. His Government actively supported the International Space Station Programme. The Japanese experiment module Kibo would be carried into space by the United States space shuttle in early 2008. Three Japanese astronauts would participate in space-shuttle flights, including one long-duration mission. His Government participated in the Sentinel-Asia project to use satellite data to support disaster-management efforts, initiated by the Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum (APRSAF). Since the beginning of the project, Japan had used its Advanced Land Observing Satellite (ALOS) to carry out emergency observations of disasters in the Asia-Pacific region and then released data on the Sentinel-Asia website and cooperated with the authorities of the countries concerned.

40. The APRSAF secretariat was located in Japan. The most recent session of the Forum had been held in Indonesia in December 2006 and had adopted seven recommendations, including with regard to the strengthening of the Sentinel-Asia project. Its next session would be held in November 2007 in Bangalore, India, on the theme of "Space for Human Empowerment".

41. His Government continued to work toward the implementation of the UNISPACE III recommendations and "the Space Millennium: Vienna Declaration on Space and Human Development". It was committed to the United Nations space-debris-mitigation guidelines adopted by the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, and the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) was also developing its own space-debris-mitigation standards. In that context, he expressed concern at the satellite-destruction experiment that had taken place in January 2007 and urged all parties to continue to honour the principle that outer space should be used solely for peaceful purposes.

42. His delegation was participating in activities for the International Heliophysical Year (2007). In June it had hosted in Tokyo the third United Nations/ European Space Agency (ESA)/National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) workshop on the International Year and Basic Space Science. In order to promote the development of space science over the past 20 years, his Government had contributed equipment and facilities to developing countries as part of its programme of cultural official development assistance. It would continue to support self-sustaining space-education programmes in cooperation with developing countries.

43. In accordance with its belief that it could contribute to global prosperity by participating in cooperative space activities, his delegation reiterated its commitment to the Organization's efforts to promote the peaceful utilization of outer space. It would work to promote international cooperation with a view to ensuring all mankind shared in the benefits derived from space activities.

44. **Mr. Majok** (Sudan) said that space technology had great benefits for developing countries and he looked forward to further development of the benefits of space technology in such areas as sustainable development, disaster management, communications and education. In that context he welcomed the launch of the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (SPIDER) and looked forward to the related meeting to be held in Khartoum in December 2007. He also welcomed the intention of the South African Government to host the Second African Leadership Conference on Space Science and Technology for Sustainable Development in Pretoria in late 2007, in which his delegation would participate.

45. He expressed support for the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE III and cooperation between the developed and developing countries in all areas of space technology. His delegation, as a member of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, participated actively in its work and fully supported such initiatives as the SPIDER programme in order to help the developing countries bridge the gap between them and the developed countries in the area of space technology. In that context he said that the SPIDER programme should function in a fully transparent manner so as to contribute to capacity-building in national and regional disaster-management structures, particularly in the developing countries.

46. He expressed support for the recommendations in the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its efforts to increase transparency in matters relating to outer space, and urged all States to refrain from deploying weapons in outer space, which could lead to an arms race and worsen relations between States. Lastly, he expressed support for efforts to find a permanent solution to the problem of space debris through voluntary measures.

47. **Ms. Riess** (Germany) welcomed the establishment of the United Nations SPIDER programme, which would become a key initiative for applying space technologies to the sustainable development of developing countries and to reducing the impact of disasters. That programme did not duplicate other initiatives and was in keeping with the spirit of other international efforts such as the Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS), the International Charter "Space and Major Disasters" and the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction.

48. Her Government would fund the SPIDER office in Bonn in the amount of $215,000 per year in addition to providing infrastructure and office space for a period of four years, and would also second two aerospace experts to the office. The office would have the important task of providing comprehensive information on natural disasters to users 24 hours a day. Her delegation welcomed the support offered to SPIDER by an increasing number of countries, including financial and human resources, and regional support offices in particular. Further resources were nevertheless required and she appealed to Member States to support the efforts of the Office for Outer

Space Affairs in the Fifth Committee to obtain additional resources.

49. **Mr. Davide** (Philippines) observed that, after 50 years, COPUOS continued to take the lead not only in promoting the development of space technologies and applications beneficial to mankind and the environment, but also in creating the conditions that would allow non-space-faring developing countries like the Philippines to share in the benefits. His Government was endeavouring to revitalize its space-technology-applications programme to support the country's sustainable development, promote the Millennium Development Goals and improve its citizens' quality of life.

50. COPUOS would itself continue to address priorities such as space applications in agriculture, rural development, drought and desertification, thus furthering action also called for at the World Summit on Sustainable Development. The United Nations Programme on Space Applications had been particularly helpful to his country by offering capacity-building and training opportunities in such fields as remote-sensing and global navigation-satellite systems. Space technology and applications also played an important role in mitigating and preventing disasters, cases in point being the Sentinel-Asia system and the new SPIDER programme; as a disaster-prone country, the Philippines stood to benefit from them. It hoped that SPIDER would soon become operational, for international and regional assistance to the developing countries was crucial.

The meeting rose at 4.55 p.m.